Oklahoma Chess Monthly

MAY 2017

Chess News and Chess History for Oklahoma

Sammy Reshevsky, Age 9

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The Forgotten Wizard Reshevsky in Tulsa, 1921

by Tom Braunlich

In the current chess age when pre-teen prodigies seem to be sprouting up at chess tournaments everywhere, it is easy to forget that there was once one great boy chess wonder, long ago, who still dwarfs all that came before or since…

Rzeschewski.

Who? You may know him as Reshevsky, after the spelling of his name was Americanized. Sammy Reshevsky, the great grandmaster. But you may not know his phenomenal career as a child chess prodigy who reached master level by age eight (much earlier than other chess prodigies, until recent years at least, and without the aid of coaching or the internet) and became a true international celebrity nearly 100 years ago.

Even today, when we hear of nine-year-old masters like Nikhil Kumar or India's

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Praggnanandhaa, the truth is they are really only well known within the limited worldwide chess community. Sammy Rzeschewski, however, was a household name throughout Europe and North America for several years.

How did this happen? This is the tale of Young Sammy's fame, exemplified by the day Rzeschewski came to Tulsa.

It was 1920. World War I had just ended, and Europe was still struggling to recover from the carnage. The United States had been spared destruction, but over 100 thousand American soldiers had been killed. Yet the stage was set for an economic explosion that would become known as the Roaring Twenties.

Tulsa was at the forefront of that prosperity. With its oil boom in full swing, Tulsa became known as the "Oil Capital of the World," with new buildings and churches constructed downtown in the art deco style for which the city later became renowned. But amidst this boom there was still turmoil and unrest, including racial tensions, that were soon to erupt.

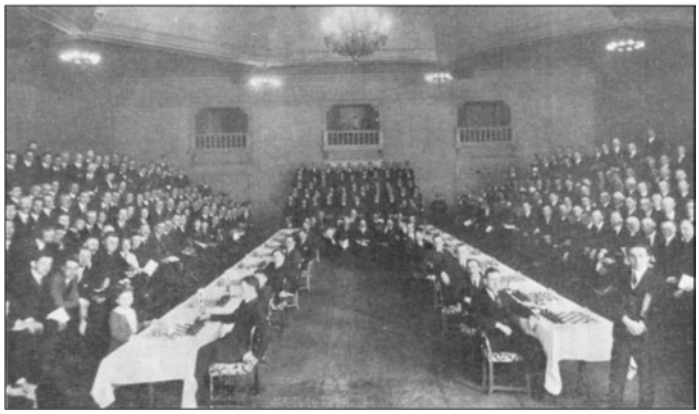
In difficult times, it is not unusual for a new face to come along who brightens the public mood and becomes a momentous celebrity as a result, as a symbol of new possibilities ahead. One of those new faces at this time was that of little eight-year-old Sammy Rzeschewski, from Poland. Hailed as a genius since age six, he soon began drawing huge crowds at simultaneous exhibitions, mowing down strong amateur opposition across Europe. The sight of this little kid beating up on experienced adult tournament players was astonishing and unprecedented. A manager was hired for him, and he began doing publicity events with other luminaries, posing for photos with kings and politicians. Throughout 1920 he toured France, Holland, Germany, Belgium, Russia, Austria, Poland, and England — and then, in November, he came to the United States.

Though his fame had preceded him, Americans are skeptical about such things. That changed with his first public event, a 20-board simultaneous exhibition with the best players at West Point Military Academy. The pint-sized eight-year-old won 19 games and drew only one. The sensational result was front-page news throughout the United States. Even small-town news editors loved publishing the photo of the little kid among the throng of defeated army officers.

Chess Prodigy Defeats Soldiers

Samuel Rzesrewski, chess marvel of the world, playing 20 chess experts at West Point Military academy. It was his first real test in this country. He is but eight years old, is Jewish, and was born in Poland. After three hours and five minutes, he had defeated 19, and the game with the twentieth, Col. G. A. Siebeger, professor of English and chess champion of West Point, was called a draw.

This kicked off Sammy's 1921 tour of the United States and Canada. Everywhere he went he played in large auditoriums to accommodate crowds of eager spectators numbering in the hundreds, and in some places, even in the thousands. Each time an opponent tipped his king, the audiences cheered.



Sammy simul in Cleveland, January 1921

Sammy spent July of 1921 in Hollywood, where he hobnobbed with movie stars anxious to connect their name to his, and vice versa. Publicity photos of him playing chess with comedian Charlie Chaplin — who at that time was probably the most famous person in the world — were splashed across the pages of many newspapers. Chaplin attended one of his exhibitions, as did Douglas Fairbanks. Popular also were photos of Sammy in giant boxing gloves, pretending to box with five-year-old movie star Jackie Coogan (a child star of the time who would one day play the role of Uncle Fester in "The Addams Family").

You can view Sammy's game with Charlie Chaplin here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9wc7VfUNJE

Sammy playing chess with Charlie Chaplin (above) and "boxing" with child star Jackie Coogan (left).

With the lone exception of Bobby Fischer's brief apex in 1972, Rzeschewski's fame far outstripped that of any other chess player in the United States before or since. Sammy's exploits frequently made national news as his 1921 tour went west from New York and reached California in June.

Tulsa Connection

From Hollywood, Sammy's 1921 tour turned back eastward. In mid-August they stopped in St. Louis, remaining for several weeks as Sammy did several exhibitions to accommodate the crowds. At this time, Tulsa became a last-minute addition to the schedule.

Why Tulsa? Two reasons. First, a new club had been formed. The Tulsa Chess and Checkers Club had a permanent location in a building downtown, and had been actively and creatively promoting itself all year trying to grow its ranks. It was obvious to them that a simul by Sammy was the perfect opportunity to attract attention.

But there was another, more somber reason, too. The Tulsa Race Riot had occurred just three months before. Most of the black side of town, which had been extraordinarily prosperous, was burned to the ground in an ugly frenzy that only ended after federal authorities were called in. Estimates put the number of people killed at nearly 300. This huge self-inflicted wound was still fresh in everyone's minds (and had ruined the city's reputation nationally). So like the war-ravaged citizens of Europe, Tulsans also longed for a fresh face to brighten spirits. Or so it was argued by the chess club members who sought to raise funds to bring little Sammy Rzeschewski to Tulsa.

The $500 cost of a Rzeschewski simul was quite steep — accounting for inflation, that is over $7,000 in today's money. (By contrast, 50 years later GM Gligoric got paid $5 per board for a simul in OKC.) The club hit up local businessmen to raise the money, arguing it would be good PR for the city after the debacle of the recent race riots. Club members also contributed from their own pockets, and a $1 attendance fee would be charged to cover the rest of the expenses.

For MAY 2017

Top 25 Active Oklahoma Players				
	Player	This Month	Change +/-	
1	Advait Patel	2477	0	
2	Daniel Ng	2273	0	
3	Howard Zhong	2241	-7	
4	Mark Hulsey	2221	0	
5	Tom Braunlich	2201	0	
6	Tom Amburn	2200	0	
7	Chibuzo C Ilonze	2178	0	
8	Sergey Galant	2178	0	
9	David Zelnick	2146	0	
10	Joshua Alexander	2142	0	
11	Anthony Paolercio	2130	0	
12	Jamal I. El Chamieh	2124	0	
13	John Cope	2089	0	
14	Ryan Farell	2089	0	
15	Chuck Johnson	2087	0	
16	Michael Nugent	2087	0	
17	Tom Patton	2080	0	
18	Veronika Zilajeva	2078	+21	
19	James Tyner	2074	0	▼
20	Joe Dean Veal	2071	0	▼
21	David Luscomb	2068	0	▼
22	Charles D Unruh	2062	0	
23	Matt Dalthorp	2052	-22	▲
24	Alan Islas	2024	0	
25	Charles M Unruh	2005	4	▲

Player of the Month

VERONIKA ZILAJEVA

The teenager from OKC continues to impress. She won the Challengers April Open, and hasn't lost to anyone rated under 2200 since the U.S. Open last August.

Once the Tulsa event was slated for August 30, the Sammy publicity machine kicked in. The *Tulsa World* published a series of pre-event articles that were primarily based on publicity materials the tour manager had developed and would provide to any town on the tour. The "Polish Wizard" was coming! The same photo of little Sammy stepping off a train that appeared in the *Tulsa World* had been used in many other papers. The accompanying article drew mostly on the canned publicity material provided, but of course the paper in each town always added its own local angle.

All such articles about the sensational boy genius followed three lines of thought:

(1) recapping his many exploits, publicity stunts, or sensational stories (such as the time he refused to throw an exhibition game with the Austrian Emperor, or the time during the war in occupied Poland when he defeated a German general who had been skeptical about his reputation and said, "You know how to shoot, I know how to play chess.")

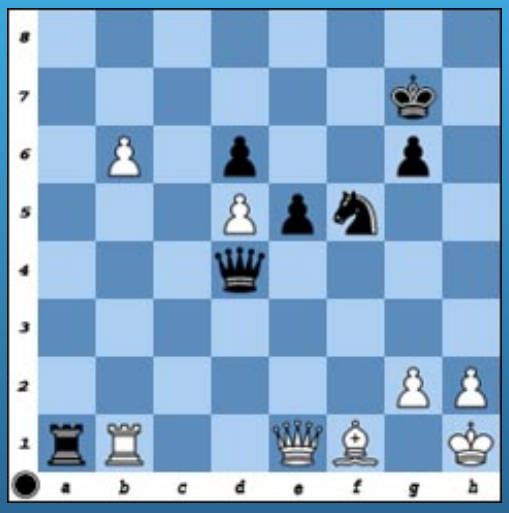
(2) fretting about the fate of other child phenoms, who all seemed to follow the old Lao Tzu adage, "The flame that burns twice as bright lasts half as long." Examples were given of other young geniuses who went crazy or met early miserable fates.

(3) speculating that Sammy might be different because he "just wants to be a regular boy." Much was written on the theme of how he was a boy at heart who liked to roller skate, sing, ride bikes, wrestle, etc.

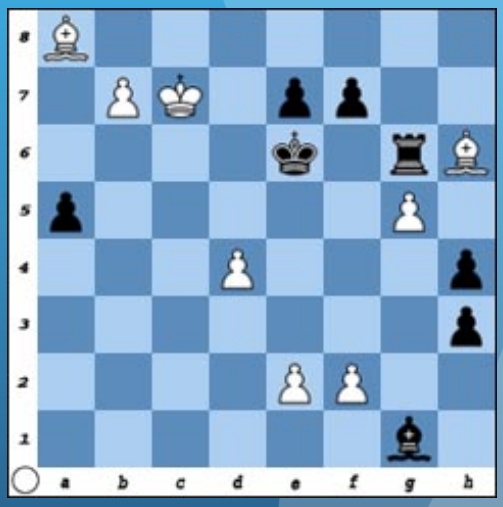
Child Prodigy Has Desire to Desert the Chess Board to Become a Great Singer

PUZZLES

Answers Next Page



Black to move and win.
From the game Karpov-Taimanov 1977



White to move and win.
A wonderful composed study. Try it.
Hint: White can't just queen his b-pawn as then …Bh2+ would skewer it.

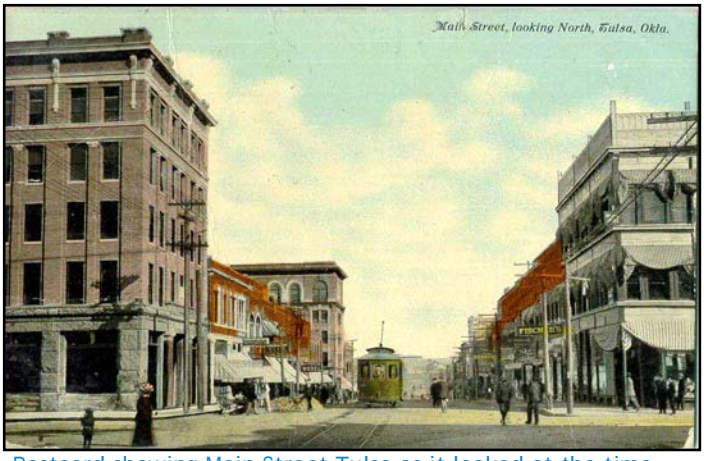
Many such articles were written about Rzeschewski, such as this nice example from the Brooklyn Eagle:
http://www.chesshistory.com/winter/pics/cn9187_reshevsky1.jpg

Sammy fed into this latter image with delightful quotes that could only come from an authentic nine-year-old. When asked about his chess skill, he said,

> *"How do I play? So many people ask me. How do they walk and talk? Can any one tell me that? I just play, that's all. I have a good memory for everything. I can play games blindfolded. How do I sing? How can I run a car? How do I ride the bicycle? Why don't people ask me that? Many people say I am fresh. That is not true. I am annoyed by so many people. Once in a department store in Philadelphia three thousand people crowded in to see me and I cried. People I never saw before tried to hug and kiss me. When I push them away and say, 'Get away from me!' they say I am fresh and spoiled. How do they get that way?" (Brooklyn Eagle, 1921)*

The *Tulsa World*'s pre-event article headline was: "Save for Chess Wizardry, Polish Youth, Nine Years Old, is Normal Boy."

It also reported a claim that at that point in the tour Sammy had played a total 1070 games of simultaneous chess in America and lost only 10.



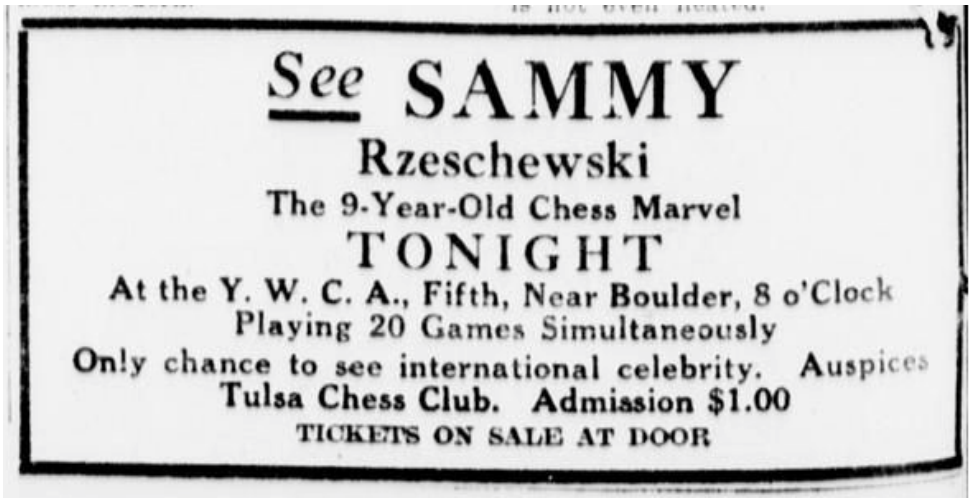
Postcard showing Main Street Tulsa as it looked at the time.

Sammy and his manager arrived in Tulsa on August 29 and stayed three days. The simul took place on the evening of August 30, with 20 boards as usual. He was pitted against the best players who could be mustered up at that

Answers to the Puzzles

(1) Taimanov shocked then world champion Karpov with the shot 1…Ng3+! If 2. Qxg3, then simply 2…Rxb1 2…Ra8!

(2) White wants to queen his pawn by force without allowing the skewer …Bh2+. Thus he starts with **1. d5+!** Now if Black takes this pawn, white queens with discovered check and wins, and if 1…Ke5 this blocks the diagonal Black needs for the skewer. So **1…Kf5** is Black's only move. Then **2. e4+!** Again, now if 2… Kxe4 would put the King on the diagonal on which White can queen with discovered check (i.e. 3. b8=Q, Bh2+ 4. d6+ blocking the skewer with the discovered check, and wins!) So 2…**Kg4** is forced and White continues again with **3. f3+!** Black must also decline this pawn and is forced to play **3…Kh5!** But now what does White do? The answer is to take advantage of Black's cornered King by unraveling all he has done so far in order to free the bishop on a8 for a deadly check: **4. b8=Q! Bh2+ 5. f4! Bxf4+ 6. e5! Bxe5+ 7. d6! Bxd6+ 8. Kd7 Bxb8** (Finally the queen is taken, but…) **9. Bf3 mate!**


See SAMMY
Rzeschewski
The 9-Year-Old Chess Marvel
TONIGHT
At the Y. W. C. A., Fifth, Near Boulder, 8 o'Clock
Playing 20 Games Simultaneously
Only chance to see international celebrity. Auspices
Tulsa Chess Club. Admission $1.00
TICKETS ON SALE AT DOOR

time, including club champion J.R. Cole, Jr.

The Tulsa simul was a wipeout. Sammy won all 20 games. The *World* reported, "Sweeping through the ranks of the Tulsa chess players like a cyclone, little Sammy Rzeschewski, the boy chess marvel, completely captivated and astounded a splendid audience which filled the auditorium, winning 20 games and losing none to the pick of the best players of the city."

Rzeschewski was dressed in his "sailor suit" adorned with medals that had been presented to him in various ceremonies, and he entered the auditorium perched on the shoulder of his manager.

When I was a new player in the 1970s, a chess player at the Tulsa club named Earl Johnson told me that when he was young he had seen Rzeschewski

BOY MARVEL WINS ALL CHESS GAMES

Sweeps Through Ranks of Tulsa Players Without Difficulty

Sweeping through the ranks of the Tulsa chess players like a cyclone, little Sammy Rzeschewski, the boy chess marvel, completely captivated and astounded a splendid audience which filled the auditorium

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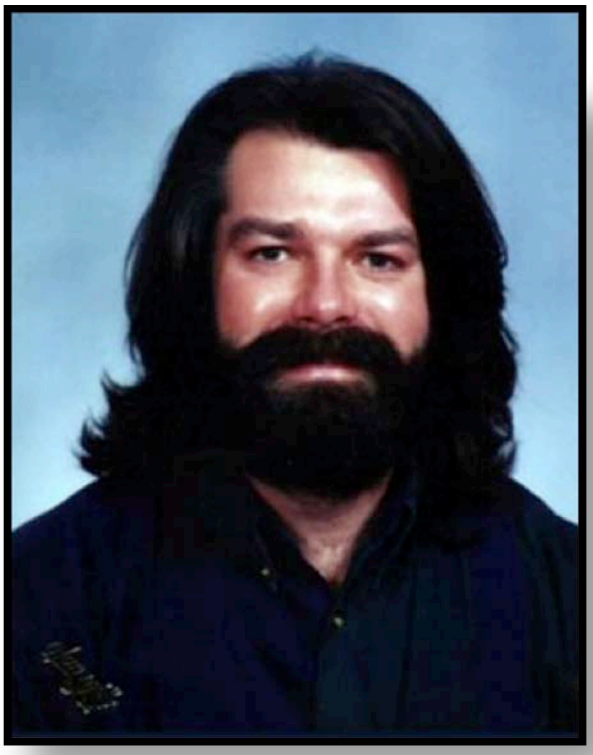
Todd Canary 1964-2017

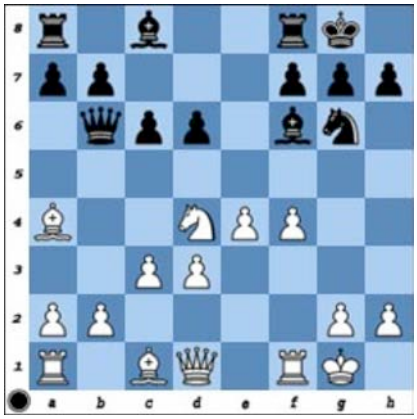


Todd "TC" Canary passed away March 30, 2017, reportedly due to coronary insufficient heart disease. He was a long-time Class B player from Norman, OK, although he hadn't participated in tournaments since 2005, apparently having chosen to devote more of his time to religion.

He once defeated GM Eduard Gufeld in a simultaneous exhibition (see game), and was an intelligent and gifted person with many interests.

His online obituary says, "He loved to play and teach chess and won trophies. He was highly intelligent, loved linguistics, and enjoyed reading the dictionary for fun. He studied Hebrew at OU. He enjoyed learning and teaching Hebrew from a Biblical perspective… and literally spent thousands of hours learning and reading the scriptures. His faith was Messianic-Jewish. He loved tennis, played drums, and took guitar lessons."

Gufeld, Eduard GM (2565)
Canary,Todd (1550)
[C61]
2nd GM Gufeld Simul Tulsa, 18.05.2001
[TB]
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nd4 4.Nxd4 exd4 5.0-0 Ne7 6.d3 Ng6 7.f4 Be7 8.Nd2 0-0 **9.Nf3 d6 10.Nxd4 c6 11.Ba4 Qb6 12.c3 Bf6**



13.Qe2??
[The experienced grandmaster makes a rare blunder, forgetting he was unprotecting his Bishop on a4 with this move. 13.Be3 Qxb2 14.Qc1 Qxc1 15.Raxc1=]
13...Bxd4+ 14.cxd4 Qxd4+ 15.Be3 Qxa4
So Todd had won a piece. But many a grandmaster had gotten out of worse positions than this, as the amateur player really feels the pressure. Yet Todd continued in a calm manner to hold onto his extra material, refute the GM's desperation tries, and win the game quite nicely.
16.f5 Ne7 17.f6 Ng6 18.fxg7 Re8 19.Rf6 Re6 20.b3 Qb5 21.Bd4 Rxf6 22.Bxf6 Ne5 23.Rf1 Qxd3 24.Qxd3 Nxd3 25.Rd1 Nc5 26.Rxd6 Be6 27.e5 Rc8 28.h3 Ne4 29.Rd4 Nc3 30.Rd2 Nd5 31.Kf2 h6 32.Kf3 Kh7 33.Ke4 Kg6 34.Rf2 Re8 35.Kd4 b6 36.g4 c5+ 37.Kd3 Nb4+ 38.Kc3 b5 39.a3 Nd5+ 40.Kb2 a6 41.Rf3 Rc8 42.Rf2 Kh7 43.Rd2 c4 44.bxc4 bxc4 45.Re2 Rb8+ 46.Kc1 Nf4 47.Re3 Nd3+ 48.Kc2 Rb3 49.Re4 Nc5 50.Rd4 Nd7 51.Rd6 Rxa3 52.Rc6 Rxh3 53.Rxa6 Rb3 54.Ra8 Rb8 55.Ra7 Bxg4 56.Kc3 Be6 57.Rc7 Kg6 58.Rb7 Rg8 59.Rb1 Nxf6
0-1

ANDERSON'S AXIOMS

by Tom Braunlich

When I became editor of OCM I inherited Frank Berry's chess files, most of which he had already used in his quarterly. But one of the unused items was a long typewritten document he had received in the mail entitled simply "Chess Axioms" featuring many humorous aphorisms, observations, and musings about chess.

It apparently was something FKB was saving to use some day in a future issue. I found out the author was Robert Lein Anderson, from Norman, who gave me permission to use them.

Robert is 46 and has a degree in Philosophy from OU, which perhaps entitles him to wax philosophical about chess and life with these adages. They now total 68 in number, and he has been sporadically creating them since January 2015. "I'm the type of writer who only writes when the words are in me; especially poems, aphorisms and jokes," he says. He has been playing tournament chess since age 14, has taught chess in two grade schools in Norman, and was once head of the Chess in Schools program there.

Here are a few of my favorites, and in future issues we will see some more:

Chess Axiom #4 — In chess, as in life, you shouldn't overreact.

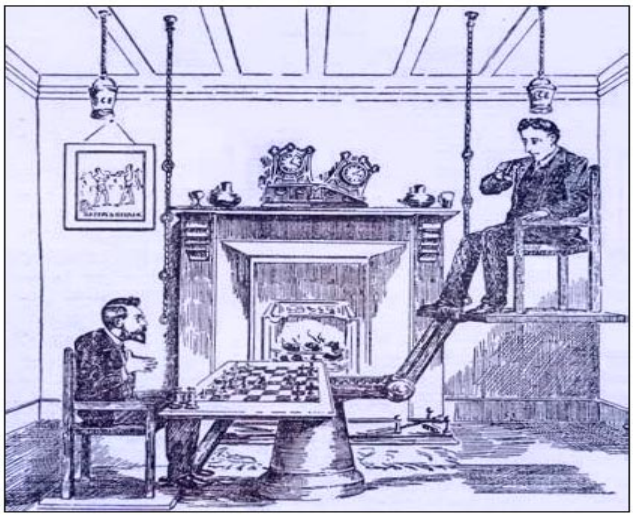
Chess Axiom #5 — When you start playing chess not to lose … you are lost.

Chess Axiom #7 — To eliminate any counterplay by your opponent, all you have to do is checkmate his king. "No king, no problem."

Chess Axiom #9 — In chess, as in life, it's good to know how and what your opponent thinks and believes.

Chess Axiom #12 — The greatest quality to have in chess — after knowledge and skill — is *fearlessness*.

Chess Axiom #32 — When someone tells you that you take chess too seriously, tell them that they don't take it seriously enough!



Chess Axiom #33 — Life is a struggle. Chess is a struggle. Therefore, "Chess is life." Maybe Fischer was onto something?

Chess Axiom #35 — Materialistic players are the most easily susceptible to sacrifices and combinations.

Chess Axiom #37 — Kramnik once said that knowledge of "chess lore" can help improve your game. He also admitted that he didn't know how this worked. I think it works in the same way that knowing the history of anything works — it gives context. It connects the dots. It shows how your activity is really done, not just how the idealists say it's done. Thus, to be a good scientist, read the history of science, etc.

Chess Axiom #39— In chess you should make everything as simple as possible for yourself and as complicated as you can for your opponent.

Chess Axiom #47 — In chess, as in life, when your opponent attacks you she sometimes forces you to make a better move than the one you had planned on making.

Chess Axiom #50 — In chess, sometimes a pattern is just a pattern. *Sometimes*.

Chess Axiom #52 — If pre-arranged 'grandmaster draw' games are okay, why not pre-arranged wins and losses?

Chess Axiom #65 — In chess, as in life, the winner wins, and the loser learns a lesson.

RED RIVER SHOOT OUT

The 15th Annual Red River Shoot Out, held once again in Davis, Oklahoma, on April 29, (just before this issue was to be released), ended in a three-peat victory for Oklahoma.

Oklahoma 15 — Texas 13

The yearly team event pits players from Oklahoma against those from North Texas in a day of serious fun, followed by a barbeque dinner. This year's match was close all the way and came down to the final two games with the score tied 13-13 before the Okie team pulled it out with some clutch play.

A full report will be in the next issue, with crosstable, photos, and games.

Challengers April 2017 Open

A one-day rapid chess G/45 tournament sponsored by the Oklahoma City Challengers Club was won by **Veronika Zilajeva**, including wins against three experienced Class A players **Logan Zachare, Judson Temple, and Shaun Graham-Bowcaster**. It is thought her victory was the first by a resident female player in the top section of an open rated tourney. This is unclear, as Rachael Arrington won a couple of small rapid chess opens in Tulsa in 2003 (I know as she got a draw with me in one). Nevertheless, no doubt it is a milestone and the first of many for Zilajeva. (See crosstable is at right.)

The U1600 Section had 11 players and was swept 4-0 by 10-year-old Maxwell Barnes, which included a win over veteran Bruce Wells. The chief TD was Joe Dean Veal. Tommy Hay assisted.

The Challengers April 22, 2017 Open
April 22, 2017 • Oklahoma City • TD: Joe Dean Veal

Pair Num	Player Name USCF ID / Rtg (Pre->Post)	Total Pts	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4
1	**VERONIKA ZILAJEVA**	4.0	W 9	W 8	W 7	W 3
OK	15229376 / R: 2057 ->2078	N:1				
2	**KRISH KUMAR**	3.0	W 13	L 3	W 14	W 4
OK	14640364 / R: 1734 ->1746	N:3				
3	**ERICK LOGAN ZACHARE**	2.5	W 5	W 2	D 4	L 1
OK	15737794 / R: 1927 ->1926	N:2				
4	**LUKE M TRAN**	2.5	W 15	W 9	D 3	L 2
KS	15393083 / R: 1665 ->1730	N:2				
5	**RYAN AMBURGY**	2.5	L 3	W 13	W 11	D 8
OK	15437654 / R: 1692 ->1710	N:3				
6	**JIM HUANG**	2.5	L 10	W 12	D 8	W 11
OK	15424553 / R: 1611 ->1662	N:2				
7	**SHAUN GRAHAM-BOWCASTER**	2.0	W 16	W 11	L 1	U
OK	12590577 / R: 1921 ->1919					
8	**JUDSON TEMPLE**	2.0	W 12	L 1	D 6	D 5
OK	10330912 / R: 1833 ->1819	N:3				
9	**CURTIS L WILLIAMS JR**	2.0	L 1	L 4	W 16	W 13
OK	12704398 / R: 1664 ->1653	N:4				
10	**CHARLES M UNRUH**	1.5	W 6	H	U	U
OK	12910285 / R: 2001 ->2005					
11	**SPENCER LEWIS CONKLIN**	1.0	W 14	L 7	L 5	L 6
MO	12818486 / R: 1722 ->1679					
12	**RUBIN A WELLS**	1.0	L 8	L 6	L 13	W 14
OK	12438504 / R: 1500 ->1500					
13	**OSCAR WANG**	1.0	L 2	L 5	W 12	L 9
OK	16068470 / R: 1288 ->1308					
14	**AARON PETERS**	1.0	L 11	W 16	L 2	L 12
OK	15815593 / R: 1056P20->1082P24					
15	**MATT DALTHORP**	0.0	L 4	U	U	U
OK	13564995 / R: 2074 ->2052					
16	**JASON SCHROEDER**	0.0	L 7	L 14	L 9	U
OK	15878498 / R: 1279P4 ->1163P7					

Veronika Zilajeva, flanked by Joe Veal and Judson Temple

Overheard on the Internets...
Magnus Carlsen was supporting the OKC Thunder!
"They are an underdog team with a brilliant player!"

Woychuk,Jonathan (1653)
Amburgy,Ryan (1578)
2017 Mid-America Open U1700 • 26.03.2017 • [B01]
[Notes by TB]

Young Ryan Amburgy tied for first in the U1700 section of the large Mid-American Open tournament held in late March in St. Louis. Here is his crucial last-round game. Chris Amburgy sums it up as follows: "It was the final round against the top rated player in the section who had dropped an earlier match and was playing to get back in the money. If Ryan won, he was guaranteed at least a tie for second and a significant ratings improvement and cash prize. If he lost, it would have still been a good tournament."

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 3.d4 Bg4

The Portuguese Variation, a tricky line that is great for must-win occasions.

4.Be2

This is a common mistake that allows Black easy equality and a nice game. It is a common move for people being faced with this variation for the first time, and who thus are naturally reluctant to weaken their kingside with the move 4.f3 but nevertheless that move, fighting for the initiative, is White's theoretically best try.

The bishop move gives black a nice Caro-Kann like pawn structure in which he has already swapped off his problem queen's bishop. The game continues with Ryan showing how Black can get a strong attack.

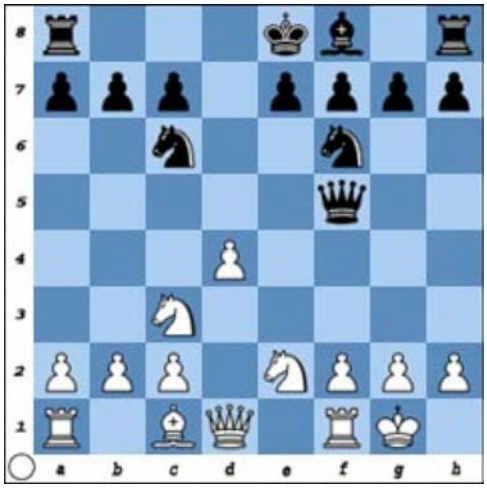
Instead after the main line move 4. f3 Bf5 5.c4!? (trying to hold the pawn) leads to a famous example of how tricky this line can be for white: 5...e6 6.dxe6 Nc6 7.Be3 Bb4+ 8.Nc3 Qe7! 9.d5 0-0-0 10.Qa4 Nxd5! 11.cxd5 Qh4+! 12.Kd1 *(12.g3 Bxc3+ 13.bxc3 Qxa4)* 12...Rxd5+ 13.Nxd5 Qe1# 0-1 Wang (2540) - Damaso (2410) 1996;

So the main lines are 4.f3 Bf5 5.g4!? (or 5. Bb5+)]

4...Bxe2 5.Nxe2

5.Qxe2 is more often played, to develop the knight on f3. One of the classic games in this line was a sparkling victory over a Chinese GM by Rui Damaso, one of the Portuguese developers of this variation, which went: 5...Qxd5 6.Nf3 e6 7.0-0 Bd6 8.c4 Qh5 (Threatening ...Bxh2+) 9.Nc3 Nc6 10.h3 0-0-0 11.Be3 g5 12.Nxg5 Qg6 13.Qf3 Bb4 14.Rfd1 Bxc3 15.bxc3 h6 16.d5 Ne5 17.Qe2 hxg5 18.Bxa7 Qf5 19.Rab1 Ne4 20.Bd4 g4 21.Qb2 b6 22.Qa3 gxh3 23.Bxb6 Nf3+ 24.Kf1 hxg2+ 25.Ke2 Ng3+ 26.fxg3 Qe4+ 27.Be3 g1N+ 28.Kf1 Qxc4+ 29.Kg2 Rh2# 0-1 (29) Ye,J (2560)-Damaso,R (2415)/Macau 1996

5...Qxd5 6.0-0 Nc6 7.Nbc3 Qf5



With the light-square bishops swapped off already, Ryan's queen is quite safe here in the middle and he already has equality. White's N on e2 is not well placed to defend his king, so Ryan rightly decides to be aggressive and go for queenside castling...

8.Be3 [If 8.Ng3 then 8...Qg6 followed by ...h5...h4]

8...0-0-0 9.Ng3 Qd7

I would still prefer 9...Qg6 because if white tries to sacrifice a pawn for initiative by

10.Qf3 this can be met nicely with 10...e6! *(10...Nxd4 11.Bxd4 Rxd4 12.Nb5* is a lot less clear I think.*)* 11.Rad1 Qxc2 with a clear pawn up for black.;

After 9...Qg6 maybe Amburgy was concerned about the reply 10.f4 however, the computer points out the surprising ripost for Black: 10...e5! 11.f5 Qg4 with a big advantage. However, Amburgy's move, putting pressure on d4, is also good and sure enough white reacts defensively.]

10.Nce2? [Too passive. In a position like this white must fight for the initiative and moving a piece twice, ignoring development just to defend a pawn, won't do. White needs to be willing to gambit a pawn if necessary to insure he will get his share of the threats in the middlegame! So for example white could have tried: 10.Qe2!? Nxd4 *(10...e6=)* 11.Bxd4 Qxd4 12.Rfd1 and no matter where black puts his queen white can continue with Rxd8+ and Rd1+ and have a lot of development and initiative for the pawn. Instead, White's slow move gives Ryan all he needs to attack:

10...e6 [10...h5 could have been played right away, but Amburgy sensibly prefers to finish development first.]

11.c3 Be7 12.b4 h5

Both sides have finally begun their pawn storms, but the race is going to favor Black. Why? Mainly it is because white's awkward knights on the kingside are in each other's way, and the N on g3 is a target for the h-pawn and will either have to retreat to h1, or else white will have to spend a move to give it a better retreat square. Either way, white has a harder time handling the pawn advance than black does.

13.a4?

An instructive moment. White is both underestimating his opponent's attack, and overestimating his own. White actually uses an attacking pattern that is familiar to good players -- he doesn't want to play 13. b5 because he doesn't want black to reply 13...Na5 and "clog up" his pawn advances. So White plays his pawn to a5 first before going b4-b5. However, that prep work takes two moves, and by then Black will already have the initiative on the kingside as the game shows. In such situations, it is important for a player in white's position here to realize that maintaining activity is more important than material. White should have played 13.b5 anyway. There are now two lines:

(1) 13...Na5 14.Qa4! b6 White has protected b5 with tempo and thus not wasted a tempo in the race and here has time to provide a better retreat spot for his g3 knight: 15.Nf4! h4 16.Nge2 admittedly here black is still better, but at least when ...g5 is played white can play N(f4)-d3-e5 ideas and the game is still unclear, i.e., my computer gives: 16...g5 17.Nd3 h3 18.Ne5 Qd5 19.f3 etc.

(2) 13...Nb8! is actually better than ...Na5 because it doesn't allow white a free move to save his g3 knight without losing the unprotected pawn on b5! 14.Qd3 The best white can do is sacrifice a pawn. 14...h4 15.Ne4 Nxe4 16.Qxe4 Qxb5 And white is down a pawn, but he is alive and might get some play down the b-file, as some of black's attacking pieces have been traded and his attack thus slowed. This was white's best chance.]

13...h4 14.Nh1 h3 15.a5

[White plows ahead with his plan and is now ready for b4-b5, but he shouldn't allow Black to open the h-file. Instead: 15.g3 Ne5! shows how much trouble white is already in. 16.f3 *(16.dxe5? Qc6* wins*)* 16...Qc6 and black's N on c6 has gone from target to attacker.]

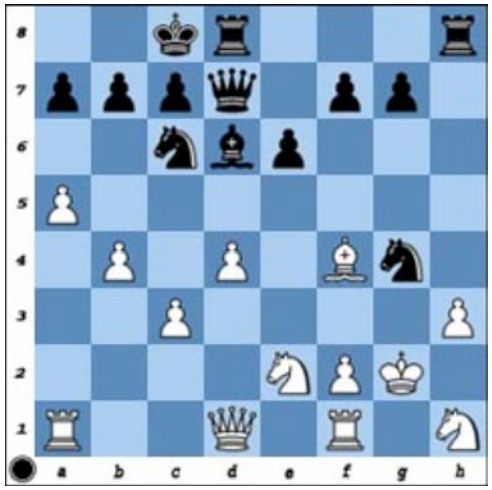
15...hxg2 16.Kxg2 Ng4 17.Bf4

[17.h3 Qd5+ 18.Kg3 Nce5 is curtains.]

17...Bd6

[Here Ryan slips a bit. He has the right idea to prepare ...e5, but actually it could be played right away with an even stronger attack: 17...e5! 18.dxe5 *(18.Bg3 Nxh2!)* 18...Qe6 this side-step gains a tempo on the queen and also threatens ...Nxh2!

18.h3



18...e5 19.Bg3 Nf6 20.f3

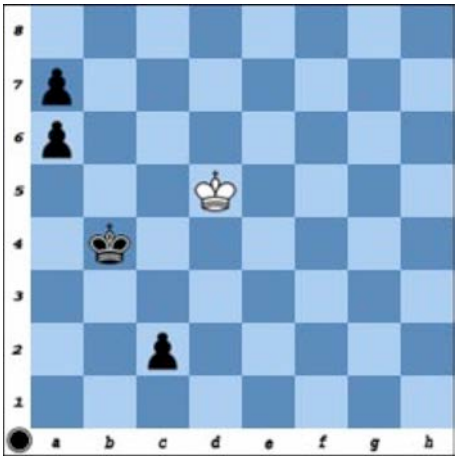
[White's last practical chance was 20.Ng1 to defend the h3 point, then 20...exd4 is good enough to win, i.e. 21.b5 Bxg3 22.Nxg3 Qd5+ 23.f3 Qxb5]

20...Qxh3+ 21.Kf2 e4 22.Ke1 exf3 23.Nf4 Qxh1

Transposing into an easily won piece-up ending is quite efficient here. Black could also just continue the attack with 23...Bxf4 24.Bxf4 Rhe8+ 25.Kd2 Nxd4 26.cxd4 Rxd4+ and wins faster. If you have the time to calculate all this safely it can save a lot of time!

24.Qxf3 Qxf3 25.Rxf3 Rh1+ 26.Rf1 Rxf1+ 27.Kxf1

So Amburgy has emerged up a piece and a pawn with a clear win. His opponent should really resign soon, but decides to play it out all the way to mate. 27...Ne4 28.Bh2 g5 29.Rc1 Bxf4 30.Bxf4 gxf4 31.Kg2 Nxd4 32.cxd4 Rxd4 33.Rb1 Nd2 34.Rb2 f3+ 35.Kf2 Rg4 36.Rxd2 Rg2+ 37.Ke3 Rxd2 38.Kxd2 Kd7 39.Ke3 Kc6 40.Kxf3 Kb5 41.Kf4 Kxb4 42.Kf5 c5 43.a6 bxa6 44.Kf6 c4 45.Kxf7 c3 46.Ke6 c2 47.Kd5



47...c1Q?

Amburgy's only real mistake in the game! He might have taken this chance to toy with his opponent for not resigning, by promoting to a knight. Then promote the other two pawns to knights also and mate him with three knights (or with Bishop+Knight). I've known several players who loved to underpromote and mate with Bishop+Knight when opponents refused to resign... it's fun. I'm only partly kidding here... Nakamura once had a game in which a computer wouldn't resign, so he underpromoted five pawns (ending up with SIX bishops against a lone king. He then toyed with it awhile before delivering a picturesque checkmate. See that game here: https://www.chess.com/forum/view/general/nakamura-defeats-rybka-in-a-loooong-game

48.Ke5 Qd2 49.Ke4 Kc4 50.Ke5 Qd4+ 51.Kf5 Qe3 52.Kf6 Qe4 53.Kf7 Qe5 54.Kg6 Qf4 55.Kg7 Qf5 56.Kh8 Qg5 57.Kh7 Kd5 58.Kh8 Ke6 59.Kh7 Kf7 60.Kh8 Qh6#

A very well-played game by Ryan Amburgy, showing a good attacking feel and command of tactics, as well as good technique. Clearly his lessons with Cope and Veal have started to pay off! Watch out for him in the future.

0-1

LM Ron Luther (2204)
GM Elshan Moradiabadi (2633)
[B26] Mid America Open (1), 24.03.2017
[Notes by Ron Luther]

After having not played in a slow event for a while, I decided to take off a little time, and play in the Mid America Open. To my suprise I was in the lower half of the draw! Not something that has happened to me before in Missouri. So 1st round I got to play on Board 1.

One thing I teach my students is the "Hunter-Hunted" rule. Meaning the Lower Rated Player is the "Hunter" as he has nothing to lose. He can also afford the draw. Whereas the Higher Rated Player is the "Hunted", and has to try and win. This is even more so, the bigger the difference in Rating.

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 e6 3.g3 Nc6 4.Bg2 g6 5.d3 Bg7 6.Be3 d6 7.Qd2 Nd4 8.Nge2 Ne7 9.0-0 Rb8 10.Nd1 Nxe2+ 11.Qxe2 0-0 12.Qd2 Re8?!

This plan to save the dark-squared Bishop, wastes several moves, and as will be seen later, he has to exchange it anyway later. [12...Nc6]

13.Bh6 Bh8 14.c3 b6 [14...b5] 15.Ne3 Bb7 16.f4 d5

17.f5?! Fortune favors the Bold! [17.Rad1]

17...dxe4? [17...exf5 18.Bf4 dxe4 19.Bxb8 Qxb8 20.dxe4 fxe4≥]

18.fxe6 With mate threatened on f7, Black has no time to do other things. 18...fxe6 19.g4! [19.Ng4 is the computers move, I like mine better.]

19...Bg7 Back again? 20.Bxg7 Kxg7 21.Qf2 Rf8 22.Qg3± Dark Squares! 22...Qd7 23.dxe4 [23.g5! Looks even stronger]

23...Nc6 24.g5!

This further controls the dark squares and sets up some mating nets in the future.

24...Rbd8 25.Qh4?! [25.Ng4!] 25...Ne5 26.Qg3 Nd3?

I was shocked by this move, feeling it was bad. 27.Rxf8 Rxf8?! [27...Kxf8 Was the best try.] 28.Rd1 Now Black is in serious trouble.

28...Ba6 29.c4 Kg8 The threat was Rxd3

and Nf5+ 30.Bf1 Bxc4 31.Nxc4 Qd4+ 32.Qe3 Qxc4 33.Qxd3 Qxa2 34.Qc3? A mistake I correct in 2 moves. I am down to about 20 mins at this point to get to move 40 34...Qa4! 35.Qd3 Qa2 36.Qc2! Qa5 37.Bc4 I was determined not to let this one slip away! 37...Re8 38.Qb3 Kf8 39.Bxe6 While this wins....Qf3+ is faster. 39...c4 40.Qf3+ After having several GMs on the ropes it was nice to get that 1st win over one! The 429 rating upset was the biggest during the tournament. Too bad they didn't have a prize for that. 1-0

GM Moradiabadi

McCann, David
IM Baratosi, Daniel
[A87] Chess.com Online Match, 18.01.2017
[Notes by David McCann]
Former Okie David McCann is alive and kicking in South Texas. He sends us this recent excellent win over a Romanian IM...
1.d4 f5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.0-0 0-0 6.b3 d6 7.Bb2 Qe8 8.c4 Na6 9.Qc2 Nb4 10.Qd2 a5 11.Nc3 Bd7 12.Rfe1 e5 [I do not like this move. It opens lines to black's K, which costs IM Baratosi the game in another 8 moves. The book continuation here has been 12...c6.] 13.e4!? [In answer to IM Baratosi's pawn break, I counter with a pawn break, blowing up the center and opening lines to his K. I think black is already in serious trouble here.] 13...fxe4 [I thought 13...f4 was safer, trying to keep the position partially closed.] 14.Nxe4 Nxe4 15.Rxe4 Bf5 [This is a move I overlooked, though it seems rather obvious. I was still convinced black needed to close up the position somehow, so considered moves that could possibly be played for that purpose. Yet this move does seem accomplish that, if black continues properly.] 16.Re2 Bg4 [It may seem strange to call this move, a pin setting up another pin, a mistake (not sure what the computers think about it since I have not put the game into the engine analysis yet), but I honestly expected 16...Bd3, 17. Ree1 Bf5, 18. Re2 (I want to double R's on the e-file and break through) Bd3 with a draw. I think IM Baratosi overestimated his chances here. The text move quickly loses, as will be shown.] 17.Re3

17...Bh6? [This pin looks strong winning the exchange, but it greatly weakens the K defense giving me complete control of a1-h8 diagonal, which is deadly. I am a bit surprised an IM missed the positional and tactical threats on this crucial diagonal.] 18.dxe5 [First things first - open the diagonal. I will lose the exchange anyway, so I need to keep pushing my attack.] 18...Bxe3 [Either 18...Rxf3 or 18...Bg7, admitting the mistake of the previous move, are the only chances I thought IM Baratosi had for surviving.] 19.Qxe3 Nc2 [19...Rxf3 doesn't save the game.] 20.Qc3 [And black has no answer for e6 with mate threats on both g7 and h8. The only option I saw at this point was 20...dxe5, but after 21. Nxe5 Nxa1, 22. Nxg4 to prevent mate Black will lose too much material.]
Baratosi resigned. 1-0

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS

For More Tournament Info Visit the USCF Tournament Site:
www.uschess.org/tlas/upcoming.php

May 27-28 — Frank K Berry Memorial — Tulsa OK

5-SS; G/90+30; Trade Winds Central Hotel, 3141 E. Skelly Dr (NW corner of 51st and Harvard), Tulsa OK 74105 (918-749-5561). Free WiFi, www.tradewindstulsa.com Hotel Rates: $55-$69. Two Sections: Open, and Reserve (U1700). EF: $40 if mailed by 5/21, $50 thereafter, FREE entry for Masters 2200+ (deducted from prizewinnings). Free OCF Memb. Prizes $$2400 (1st prize Gtd., the rest b/65). Open: $600(G)-250 U2100: 200-100, U1900: 200-100, Reserve (U1700): $300-200, U1400: 200-100, U1100/UNR: 150. More $$ if entries permit. Byes: One half-point bye Rds 1-5 if commit before Sat 9PM. REG: 9-9:45 Sat AM Rounds: 10-2:30-7, 9-1:15. Possible bughouse tournament. Entries to: Tom Braunlich, 7500 S. Birch, Broken Arrow OK 74011. Inquiries: tom.braunlich@cox.net Web: www.ocfchess.org

June 10 — Challengers Tornado Classic — Moore, OK

4-SS; G/45d5, Four Sections: Open, U1600, U1200, U800. Regency Park Baptist Church, 2001 N Janeway Ave, Moore, OK. EF: $20. Reg: 8:00am-9:345am. Info: http://www.uschess.org/tlas/8032.tla

June 9-11 (or 10-11) — Scarlet Chess Club 10th Anniversary Open — Jonesboro AR

5-SS, G/90;d10. $5000 Guaranteed Prize Fund. 2906 A St., Jonesboro, AR 72401.
Six sections, with 2-day and 3-day play options. 3 day option: Reg: Fri 5-6pm. Gm 1 6pm, merges with two-day option group for Gm 2. 2 day option: Reg: Sat 8-9am. Gm 1 9am, Gm 2 (merge with 3 day players) & 3 Saturday 1pm, 4pm. Games 4 and 5 Sunday 9am, 2pm. 6 sections: Open $750-$500-$250; U2000: $500-$250-$150; U1800: $500-$250-$150; U1600: $350-$150-$125; U1400: $350-$150-$125; U1200: $225-$125-$100. TD: Stephen Paulson EF: $85 on site ($75 adv by June 1). More info: famousctaylorinc@yahoo.com, phone (870) 897-1616.

June 24-25 — Oklahoma Open — Tulsa, OK

5-SS, Rds. 1-2 G/90 d5, Rds. 3-5 G/2 d5. Trade Winds Central Hotel, 3141 E Skelly Dr., Tulsa, 918-749-5561. Three Sections: Open, U1600, U1000. $$1500 (G); EF: $45 if rec'd by 6/19, otherwise $50, Booster $25. Reg.: 8:30-9:30am OCA Annual Membership Meeting Sunday 8am. More info: www.ochess.org.

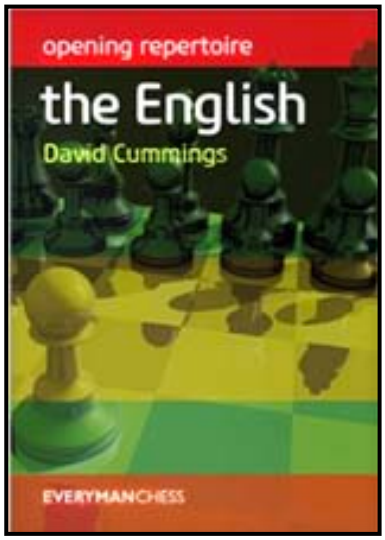
July 22-23 — Kansas Open — Wichita KS

5-SS; G/2;d5. Holiday Inn, 549 South Rock Rd., Wichita KS. EF$45 adv by July 15, $55 at door. Bughouse and Blitz tournaments Friday night 7/21. Three sections: Open, Reserve (U1800), Amateur (U1400) **Info:** Laurence Coker. Wlcoker7@hotmail.com Information website: http://www.kansaschess.org/htdocs/2017KansasOpenFlier2.pdf

Aug 5-6 — Missouri Open — Kansas City MO

5SS, G/120 d5. Unity Village Hotel, 1901 NW Blue Parkway, Unity Village, (Kansas City) MO. 888-377-0358. Prizes: b/50. Open: $500(G)-250 U2000 125, U1800 100 Reserve U1600: $200-100 $100 1st in D/E/U1000-Unr. Reg: 8:30-9:30 EF: $40 adv by 8/4. $50 cash on site. MCA mem required, Info: Randy Merrell, rwmerrell@gmail.com, 321-277-2751. MCA General Membership Meeting—9:30-10:15am Sunday. Additional info: https://goo.gl/E3SqGi.

by IM John Donaldson



The English

(Everyman Chess, www.everymanchess.com, 399 pages, figurine algebraic, paperback, $29.95)

The English by David Cummings is not your normal repertoire book for White employing 1.c4. While works by Tony Kosten and Mihail Marin focused exclusively on treatments with White's king bishop fianchettoed, and Craig Pritchett and Steve Giddins books for Everyman Chess offer hybrid treatments combing g3 and d4 systems, Cummings' has produced something new.

The English offers center-oriented lines for White front and center based on a repertoire that starts with 1.c4, but sometimes switches to 1.d4 systems. The author uses 44 model games with detailed analysis and plenty of explanatory prose to state his case.

Cummings has specific ideas of what he wants to play against and what he wants to avoid. 1. c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.e3 Bb4 5.Qc2 0-0 6.Nd5 Re8 7.Qf5 is one main line, with the clever idea of meeting 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 with 3.e3 (3…Nf6 4.Nf3) intending d4. Likewise, against 1…c5 the plan is 2.Nf3 followed by d4, where White avoids the difficult-to-crack Hedgehog setups based on …e6 and …b6 as well as …b6 and …g6.1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nc3 Nc6 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 e6 6.a3 is the core of this treatment.

Against the Queen's Gambit Declined and Semi-Slav Cummings advocates system based on e3 – 1.c4 e6 2.Nc3 d5 3.e3 Nf6 4.Nf3 Be7 5.b3 0-0 6.Bb2 and 1.c4 c6 2.Nf3 d5 3.e3 Nf6 4.Nc3. The Grunfeld is countered with the cunning 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5 3.cxd5 Nxd5 4.Nf3 g6 5.h4, seeming opting for kingside play while keeping the idea of heading for a better endgame with e4…Nxc3 and dxc3 as an option. Another tricky offering is the Anti-Dutch move-order 1.c4 f5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.d4 e6 4.Qc2 planning to meet the Stonewall with Bf4 (and not g3) and 4…d6 with 5.Nf3 Be7 6.e4.

The King's Indian is met by the flexible Petrosian System which has the added plus of being one of the more theoretically manageable lines to learn for White. Whether Black's opts for …Nbd7 or …Na6 setups, the lines often transpose.

The English offers an opening repertoire for White based on principled lines that are not vulnerable to being refuted by a sharp new move or system like the Kosten and Marin advocated 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nf3 c6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 Bf5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.Qb3 which can be strongly met by the gambit 6…Nc6 7.Qxb7 Bd7. However there is no free lunch.

Cummings' repertoire requires mastering many more middlegame structures than purely g3 based English systems. They range from the Maroczy Bind to Isolated Queen Pawn positions. While this could be just the ticket for an ambitious player wishing to learn many different types of middlegames, it does require a significant time commitment, much larger than for those who play 1.c4 followed by g3 and Bg2. Accordingly I would primarily recommend this book for players rated 2000 to 2400 USCF.

A sample chapter of this book can be found at *https://www.everymanchess.com/downloadable/download/sample/sample_id/129/*

Everyman books are available not only as printed books, but also in electronic form which includes four formats - ChessBase (CBV), PGN, Kindle and E-books for one price.

Hatcher and Kasparov in St. Louis — 2010

After the article on visiting the St. Louis Chess Club in the last issue Wayne Hatcher wrote to relate this adventure of his trip to the club… He writes:

In 2010 I visited the St. Louis Chess Club after taking a train from Albuquerque, where my wife and I were living before I retired and settled in Duncan, Oklahoma. The hassle of the 26-hour train journey in my wheelchair was soon forgotten by the pleasure of visiting alone with Nakamura at the club for a few minutes watching him play ICC Bullet.

But the fun story of playing a joke on Kasparov was the highlight!

The St. Louis club is first class, but the only thing (and it is a big deal for me) is there are no elevators (something about building being on the National Historic Register and they couldn't find space to put one in) with steep staircases from the ground floor to both the basement and the 2nd floor which limit the options of a man in a wheelchair.

But it actually worked in my favor on the occasion of Kasparov's first visit to the club. There were about 120 people who climbed up the stairs and paid $10 each to have Kasparov autograph his books (and to get a 3"x5" picture of them with Garry). I sat patiently on the ground level waiting about an hour for him to come (several club staff repeatedly told me he would stop and see me) and Nigel Short, the English GM who had contested a world championship with Kasparov, was also there prior to doing a lecture later at the club.

As Kasparov came downstairs to see me, and with Short standing nearby, I played an English opening on the board between us! Kasparov's laugh is shown in the photos and he said, "Must be an English-evening!" He sat behind the board as pictures were taken, so I asked him if there was any chance that he would return to the competitive chess arena one day. He replied, "No, I am moving forward." (I think he meant moving on to politics). Then we shook hands and he slowly stood up and walked downstairs where Nigel gave a lecture and simul. I watched on closed circuit TV. I did hear something interesting during Nigel's lecture, During a moment as Nigel was displaying moves from one of his recent GM tournaments Kasparov shouted a suggestion from the back of the lecture hall. Nigel looked up and thanked Garry for his suggestion and then said, "Who am I to disagree with the greatest chess player of all time!"

Garry was nice. I did not get to play him, but it felt like I did as he sat across the board from me and gave me a firm handshake. Quite a deal for $10!

RESHEVSKY continued…

give this exhibition. He said the kid would skip as he moved between tables, and could barely see over the table edge to view the chessboards.

Unfortunately, the *World* published no photos from the Tulsa exhibition. But they did print a well-written article by A.V. Bourque, the chess club president, with his impressions under the headline, "'Superman' or Inspired? Youthful Wizard Riddle for Psycho-Analysts." (The use of the term 'Superman' here is intriguing, as the comic book character by that name did not appear in a published work until 1933.) Bourque speculated whether Sammy would "burn out," and included some Tulsa anecdotes on his time with Reshevsky.

Bourque asked the boy how he beat strong players. Sammy said, "How do I do it? I don't know. I can see a lot of moves ahead and just go ahead and beat them."

> *Sammy likes to play as all children play… Unlike other children, however, he does not want to be shown. He brooks no suggestions … He is quick to pick up expressions of all kinds. The day following his exhibition he was playing pool with one of his chess victims. This player, exceptionally skilled at pool, was showing Sammy how to play and one of his shots called for an expression from the boy. "What kind of a shot was that?" asked Sammy, and the other player said, "That was a 'slicker' shot." "Slicker!" said Sammy, "Slicker!" and it is safe to say that somewhere in this country today Sammy is playing "slicker" shots on a pool table.*
>
> *He also likes to ride a bicycle and insisted on returning to his hotel just before train time Wednesday evening on one. As the result, with no time to spare, it was necessary for his hosts to speed up their auto bringing Sammy's manager to the train and Sammy, riding hard to keep up with them, was a very tired sweaty little boy who left Tulsa.*
>
> *Tulsa was not prepared to see the little mite of humanity who appeared on his manager's shoulder at the beginning of the exhibition. To see the little chap, moving from board to board hurriedly making his moves, only stopping now and then to give thought to the play in front of him, was a revelation to the chess players themselves for his quickness of thought, combined with his deadly accuracy was the greatest exhibition of chess that any of them had ever witnessed. … Sammy would laugh and jolly the players for the most part, or storm at them for not resigning when he thought they should… (Bourque, Tulsa World, September 4, 1921)*

Bourque did call young Sammy "temperamental as a diva" for refusing to eat breakfast the day after the exhibition.

When asked how he liked Hollywood, Sammy said, "Fine. I liked Charlie Chaplin but I don't like Jackie Coogan," (who Sammy said had punched him in the nose when he wasn't expecting it during their staged publicity boxing photos).

Bourque ended with a rather dark speculation on Sammy's future: "What the future holds for Sammy no one can foretell. If he retains his health he should have a wonderful career. Already at the very top of the chess world, a few years should see him absolutely unbeatable in that game and he should be a world wonder at anything requiring great mental effort. On the other

hand, unless his health is safeguarded his lot might be that of many great mental wizards who, broken in mind and body go down to an untimely grave."

Although Sammy often said in interviews he wanted to be world champion (among other things), his actual future was derailed by circumstances. He did indeed become a top international player, but just about the time he became an adult and could have made a run for the championship, the world was hit by the Great Depression in the 1930s and the rise of fascism. Reshevsky (as his name came to be spelled) played on the American teams that won the Olympiads in the 1930s and competed in a few big events, including winning at Margate, where he beat Capablanca. But he was always struggling financially and depending on patrons; at one point he gave up chess and went to the University of Chicago to train as an accountant to secure a steady job. He really never quite was a true professional, as he had a family to support, but he did continue to play frequently at the highest levels. He missed out on a shot at a championship match with Alekhine in the 1930s, and World War II put everyone's chess plans on hold in the early '40s.

After the war, Reshevsky continued to be one of the top GMs and was invited to the five-player world championship tournament in 1948, at which a successor for the deceased

Reshevsky in 1948 (LIFE magazine)

Alekhine would be determined. But the title went to Botvinnik, with Reshevsky finishing third. Chess came to be dominated by the Russians in the 1950s as Reshevsky's attempts to become the challenger were frustrated, even though he won matches against Najdorf and Benko during this time.

Still, he was always at or near the top of U.S. chess until Fischer came along in the late '50s to present him with a new rivalry. They played a match in 1961 that ended drawn after 11 games (with two wins apiece), but Fischer won all the U.S. Championship tournaments during that era. Reshevsky continued to play strong chess into the 1980s and died in 1992, still often called simply, "Sammy."

Reshevsky-Fischer Match, 1961

After trouncing Tulsa in 1921, little Sammy had one more stop, in Chicago, and then ended his tour in New York. He still played exhibitions afterwards, however. In 1922, he beat three leading members of the U.S. Congress in an exhibition in the capitol

Reshevsky defeating U.S. Congressmen, 1922

building, which again made headlines around the country as newspapers delighted in the photos of our political leaders defeated by a boy and the easy fodder it made for political jokes.

In case you think perhaps Reshevsky's skill was exaggerated, won mostly at the expense of amateurs, he proved the opposite in 1922. In one of his first master-level tournaments in New York, the then-10-year-old beat David Janowski, who had played a world championship match with Lasker just 12 years earlier. Legend has it young Sammy skipped all the way home singing, "I beat a great master!"

Janowski — Reshevsky (10 years old), 1922

40. Ng5!? Janowsky has a strong passed pawn but is very weak on the light squares and around his king. Here he tries a dangerous-looking sacrifice Sammy refutes nicely to win: 40… hg5 41. fg5 Ng6! Sammy returns the piece and it is he that now gets control of the h-file and an attack on white's king: 42. Rg3 Kg7 43. Rh3 Rh8 44. hg6 Rh3 45. Kh3 Rh8 46. Kg3 Qa4 47. Qf3

47… f4+! 48. Kg4 Qc2 49. Qf4 Qe2 50. Kg3 Qd3 51. Kg2 Qe2 52. Kg3 Qh2 53. Kf3 Rf8 54. Qf6 Kg8 55. d7 Rf6 56. gf6 Qd2 57. Rh1 Qd3 58. Kg2 Qg6 59. Kf2 Qf5 60. Kg2 Qg4 61. Kh2 Qe2 62. Kh3 Qd3 63. Kh4 Qd7 64. Rg1 Kf8 65. Kg5 Qd4 0-1

Reshevsky's long career as one of the greatest players of the 20th century perhaps obscures his now under-appreciated career as the child celebrity who became a household name in 1920-22 as "the Polish Marvel" and the "Boy Wizard," captivating the public's imagination.

Ein Wunderkind: Der achtjährige Samuel Reschewski spielt in Berlin gegen 22 Gegner erfolgreich Schach.
Phot. M. Tennecke, Berlin.

Sammy giving a simul in Berlin.

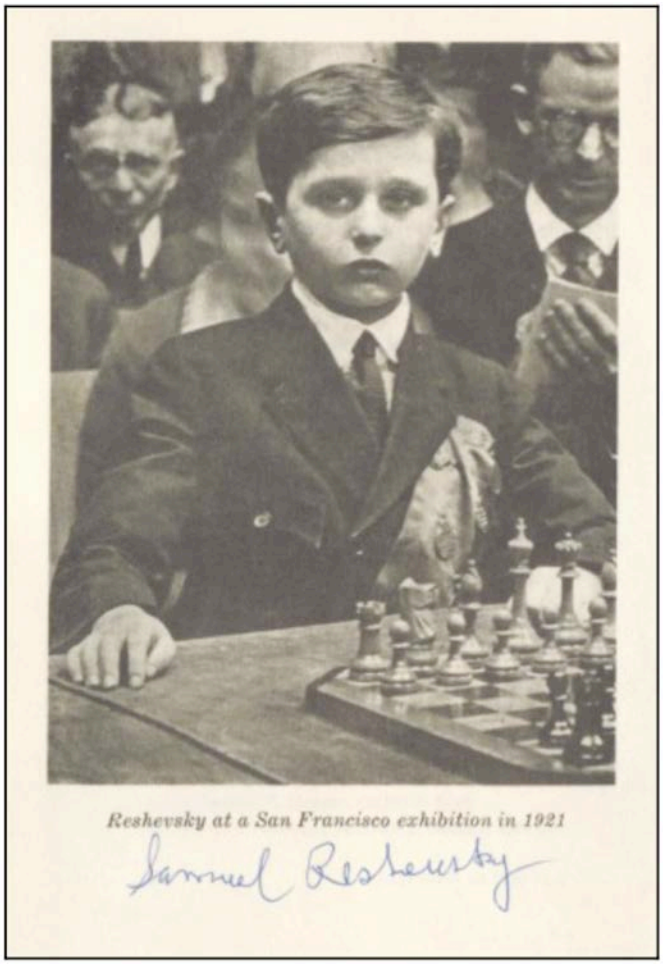
I don't know if this feat can ever be duplicated again in the jaded modern age we live in, where the mediocre is regularly touted as sensational and the sensational is often obscured by trickery.

Sammy giving a simul in Paris.

Reshevsky was the real deal. He was a true prodigy whose inexplicable powers sprung from

no apparent source other than the innate ability of an authentic genius. Such fame for a chess prodigy has not been equaled since, at least not for one so young (Fischer was already a teenager before he began to make his mark, and it wasn't until the Spassky match that he became the only other "household name" chess player the U.S. has ever known).

Reshevsky's boyish genius helped restore hope to a world recently ravaged by world war and hatred. The image of the little boy courageously overcoming his much larger and much older opponents with nothing but his own self-confidence and skill is one that resonated in the minds of Americans, and helped set the stage for America to do the same in the years and challenges that followed in this crucial time of history.



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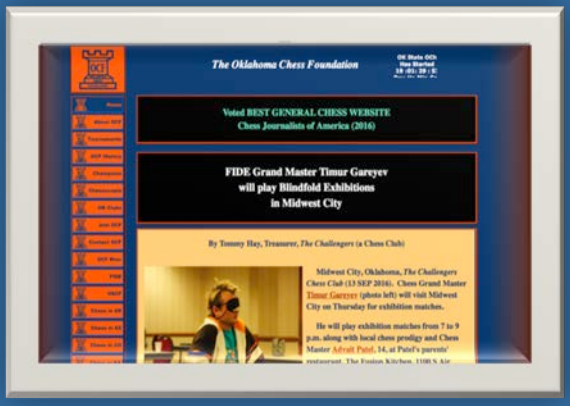
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"In order to improve your game, you must study the endgame before everything else. For whereas the endings can be studied and mastered by themselves, the middle game and opening must be studied in relation to the endgame." — Capablanca. *Image from The Sphere magazine, London, 1926.*